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MAO TSE-TUNG

ON THE CORRECT HANDLING
OF CONTRADICTIONS
AMONG THE PEOPLE



N. Srinivas Reddy M. A. B. L.
Nakarekal Constituency
DIST. NALGONDA

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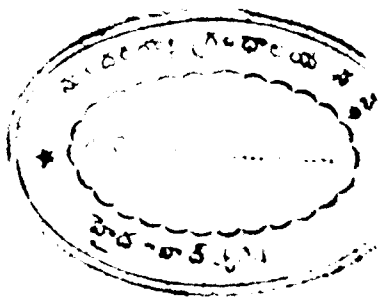
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OUR general subject is the correct handling of contradictions among the people. For convenience' sake, let us discuss it under twelve sub-headings. Although reference will be made to contradictions between ourselves and our enemies, this discussion will centre mainly on contradictions among the people.

1. TWO DIFFERENT TYPES OF CONTRADICTIONS

Never has our country been as united as it is today. The victories of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the socialist revolution, coupled with our achievements in socialist construction, have rapidly changed the face of old China. Now we see before us an even brighter future. The days of national disunity and turmoil which the people detested have gone for ever. Led by the working class and the Communist Party, and united as one, our six hundred million people are engaged in the great work of building socialism. Unification of the country, unity of the people and unity among our various nationalities—these are the basic guarantees for the sure triumph of our cause. However, this does not mean that there are no longer any contradictions in our society. It would be naïve to imagine that there are no more

contradictions. To do so would be to fly in the face of objective reality. We are confronted by two types of social contradictions—contradictions between ourselves and the enemy and contradictions among the people. These two types of contradictions are totally different in nature.

If we are to have a correct understanding of these two different types of contradictions, we must, first of all, make clear what is meant by “the people” and what is meant by “the enemy.”

The term “the people” has different meanings in different countries, and in different historical periods in each country. Take our country for example. During the War of Resistance to Japanese Aggression, all those classes, strata and social groups which opposed Japanese aggression belonged to the category of the people, while the Japanese imperialists, Chinese traitors and the pro-Japanese elements belonged to the category of enemies of the people. During the War of Liberation, the United States imperialists and their henchmen—the bureaucrat-capitalists and landlord class—and the Kuomintang reactionaries, who represented these two classes, were the enemies of the people, while all other classes, strata and social groups which opposed these enemies, belonged to the category of the people. At this stage of building socialism, all classes, strata and social groups which approve, support and work for the cause of socialist construction belong to the category of the people, while those social forces and groups which resist the

socialist revolution, and are hostile to and try to wreck socialist construction, are enemies of the people.

The contradictions between ourselves and our enemies are antagonistic ones. Within the ranks of the people, contradictions among the working people are non-antagonistic, while those between the exploiters and the exploited classes have, apart from their antagonistic aspect, a non-antagonistic aspect. Contradictions among the people have always existed. But their content differs in each period of the revolution and during the building of socialism. In the conditions existing in China today what we call contradictions among the people include the following: contradictions within the working class, contradictions within the peasantry, contradictions within the intelligentsia, contradictions between the working class and the peasantry, contradictions between the working class and peasantry on the one hand and the intelligentsia on the other, contradictions between the working class and other sections of the working people on the one hand and the national bourgeoisie on the other, contradictions within the national bourgeoisie, and so forth. Our people's government is a government that truly represents the interests of the people and serves the people, yet certain contradictions do exist between the government and the masses. These include contradictions between the interests of the state, collective interests and individual interests; between democracy and centralism; between those in positions of leadership and the led, and contradic-

tions arising from the bureaucratic practices of certain state functionaries in their relations with the masses. All these are contradictions among the people. Generally speaking, underlying the contradictions among the people is the basic identity of the interests of the people.

In our country, the contradiction between the working class and the national bourgeoisie is a contradiction among the people. The class struggle waged between the two is, by and large, a class struggle within the ranks of the people. This is because of the dual character of the national bourgeoisie in our country. In the years of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, there was a revolutionary side to their character; there was also a tendency to compromise with the enemy, this was the other side. In the period of the socialist revolution, exploitation of the working class to make profits is one side, while support of the Constitution and willingness to accept socialist transformation is the other. The national bourgeoisie differs from the imperialists, the landlords and the bureaucrat-capitalists. The contradiction between exploiter and exploited, which exists between the national bourgeoisie and the working class, is an antagonistic one. But, in the concrete conditions existing in China, such an antagonistic contradiction, if properly handled, can be transformed into a non-antagonistic one and resolved in a peaceful way. But if it is not properly handled, if, say, we do not follow a policy of uniting, criticizing and

educating the national bourgeoisie, or if the national bourgeoisie does not accept this policy, then the contradiction between the working class and the national bourgeoisie can turn into an antagonistic contradiction as between ourselves and the enemy.

Since the contradictions between ourselves and the enemy and those among the people differ in nature, they must be solved in different ways. To put it briefly, the former is a matter of drawing a line between us and our enemies, while the latter is a matter of distinguishing between right and wrong. It is, of course, true that drawing a line between ourselves and our enemies is also a question of distinguishing between right and wrong. For example, the question as to who is right, we or the reactionaries at home and abroad—that is, the imperialists, the feudalists and bureaucrat-capitalists—is also a question of distinguishing between right and wrong, but it is different in nature from questions of right and wrong among the people.

Ours is a people's democratic dictatorship, led by the working class and based on the worker-peasant alliance. What is this dictatorship for? Its first function is to suppress the reactionary classes and elements and those exploiters in the country who range themselves against the socialist revolution, to suppress all those who try to wreck our socialist construction; that is to say, to solve the contradictions between ourselves and the enemy within the country. For instance, to arrest, try and sentence certain

counter-revolutionaries, and for a specified period of time to deprive landlords and bureaucrat-capitalists of their right to vote and freedom of speech — all this comes within the scope of our dictatorship. To maintain law and order and safeguard the interests of the people, it is likewise necessary to exercise dictatorship over robbers, swindlers, murderers, arsonists, hooligans and other scoundrels who seriously disrupt social order.

The second function of this dictatorship is to protect our country from subversive activities and possible aggression by the external enemy. Should that happen, it is the task of this dictatorship to solve the external contradiction between ourselves and the enemy. The aim of this dictatorship is to protect all our people so that they can work in peace and build China into a socialist country with a modern industry, agriculture, science and culture.

Who is to exercise this dictatorship? Naturally it must be the working class and the entire people led by it. Dictatorship does not apply in the ranks of the people. The people cannot possibly exercise dictatorship over themselves; nor should one section of them oppress another section. Law-breaking elements among the people will be dealt with according to law, but this is different in principle from using the dictatorship to suppress enemies of the people. What applies among the people is democratic centralism. Our Constitution lays it down that citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of

speech, of the press, of assembly, of association, of procession, of demonstration, of religious belief and so on. Our Constitution also provides that organs of state must practise democratic centralism and must rely on the masses; that the personnel of organs of state must serve the people. Our socialist democracy is democracy in the widest sense, such as is not to be found in any capitalist country. Our dictatorship is known as the people's democratic dictatorship, led by the working class and based on the worker-peasant alliance. That is to say, democracy operates within the ranks of the people, while the working class, uniting with all those enjoying civil rights, the peasantry in the first place, enforces dictatorship over the reactionary classes and elements and all those who resist socialist transformation and oppose socialist construction. By civil rights, we mean, politically, freedom and democratic rights.

But this freedom is freedom with leadership and this democracy is democracy under centralized guidance, not anarchy. Anarchy does not conform to the interests or wishes of the people.

Certain people in our country were delighted when the Hungarian events took place. They hoped that something similar would happen in China, that thousands upon thousands of people would demonstrate in the streets against the People's Government. Such hopes ran counter to the interests of the masses and therefore could not possibly get their support. In Hungary, a section of the people, deceived by domes-

tic and foreign counter-revolutionaries, made the mistake of resorting to acts of violence against the people's government, with the result that both the state and the people suffered for it. The damage done to the country's economy in a few weeks of rioting will take a long time to repair. There were other people in our country who took a wavering attitude towards the Hungarian events because they were ignorant about the actual world situation. They felt that there was too little freedom under our people's democracy and that there was more freedom under Western parliamentary democracy. They ask for the adoption of the two-party system of the West, where one party is in office and the other out of office. But this so-called two-party system is nothing but a means of maintaining the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie; under no circumstances can it safeguard the freedom of the working people. As a matter of fact, freedom and democracy cannot exist in the abstract, they only exist in the concrete. In a society where there is class struggle, when the exploiting classes are free to exploit the working people the working people will have no freedom from being exploited; when there is democracy for the bourgeoisie there can be no democracy for the proletariat and other working people. In some capitalist countries the Communist Parties are allowed to exist legally but only to the extent that they do not endanger the fundamental interests of the bourgeoisie; beyond that they are not permitted legal existence. Those who demand free-

dom and democracy in the abstract regard democracy as an end and not a means. Democracy sometimes seems to be an end, but it is in fact only a means. Marxism teaches us that democracy is part of the superstructure and belongs to the category of politics. That is to say, in the last analysis, it serves the economic base. The same is true of freedom. Both democracy and freedom are relative, not absolute, and they come into being and develop under specific historical circumstances. Within the ranks of our people, democracy stands in relation to centralism, and freedom to discipline. They are two conflicting aspects of a single entity, contradictory as well as united, and we should not one-sidedly emphasize one to the denial of the other. Within the ranks of the people, we cannot do without freedom, nor can we do without discipline; we cannot do without democracy, nor can we do without centralism. Our democratic centralism means the unity of democracy and centralism and the unity of freedom and discipline. Under this system, the people enjoy a wide measure of democracy and freedom, but at the same time they have to keep themselves within the bounds of socialist discipline. All this is well understood by the people.

While we stand for freedom with leadership and democracy under centralized guidance, in no sense do we mean that coercive measures should be taken to settle ideological matters and questions involving the distinction between right and wrong among the people. Any attempt to deal with ideological matters or

questions involving right and wrong by administrative orders or coercive measures will not only be ineffective but harmful. We cannot abolish religion by administrative orders; nor can we force people not to believe in it. We cannot compel people to give up idealism, any more than we can force them to believe in Marxism. In settling matters of an ideological nature or controversial issues among the people, we can only use democratic methods, methods of discussion, of criticism, of persuasion and education, not coercive, high-handed methods. In order to carry on their production and studies effectively and to order their lives properly, the people want their government, the leaders of productive work and of educational and cultural bodies to issue suitable orders of an obligatory nature. It is common sense that the maintenance of law and order would be impossible without administrative orders. Administrative orders and the method of persuasion and education complement each other in solving contradictions among the people. Administrative orders issued for the maintenance of social order must be accompanied by persuasion and education, for in many cases administrative orders alone will not work.

In 1942 we worked out the formula "unity—criticism—unity" to describe this democratic method of resolving contradictions among the people. To elaborate, this means to start off with a desire for unity and resolve contradictions through criticism or struggle so as to achieve a new unity on a new basis.

Our experience shows that this is a proper method of resolving contradictions among the people. In 1942 we used this method to resolve contradictions inside the Communist Party, namely, contradictions between the doctrinaires and the rank-and-file membership, between doctrinairism and Marxism. At one time in waging inner-Party struggle, the "left" doctrinaires used the method of "ruthless struggle and merciless blows." This method was wrong. In place of it, in criticizing "left" doctrinairism, we used a new one: to start from a desire for unity, and thrash out questions of right and wrong through criticism or argument, and so achieve a new unity on a new basis. This was the method used in the "rectification campaign" of 1942. A few years later in 1945 when the Chinese Communist Party held its Seventh National Congress, unity was thus achieved throughout the Party and the great victory of the people's revolution was assured. The essential thing is to start with a desire for unity. Without this subjective desire for unity, once the struggle starts it is liable to get out of hand. Wouldn't this then be the same as "ruthless struggle and merciless blows"? Would there be any Party unity left to speak of? It was this experience that led us to the formula: "unity — criticism — unity." Or, in other words, "take warning from the past in order to be more careful in the future," and to "treat the illness in order to save the patient." We extended this method beyond our Party. During the war it was used very successfully in the anti-Japanese bases to

deal with relations between those in positions of leadership and the masses, between the army and the civilian population, between officers and men, between different units of the army, and between various groups of cadres. The use of this method can be traced back to still earlier times in the history of our Party. We began to build our revolutionary armed forces and bases in the south in 1927 and ever since then we have used this method to deal with relations between the Party and the masses, between the army and the civilian population, between officers and men, and in general with relations among the people. The only difference is that during the Anti-Japanese War, this method was used much more purposefully. After the liberation of the country, we used this same method—"unity—criticism—unity"—in our relations with other democratic parties and industrial and commercial circles. Now our task is to continue to extend and make still better use of this method throughout the ranks of the people; we want all our factories, co-operatives, business establishments, schools, government offices, public bodies, in a word, all the six hundred million of our people, to use it in resolving contradictions among themselves.

Under ordinary circumstances, contradictions among the people are not antagonistic. But if they are not dealt with properly, or if we relax vigilance and lower our guard, antagonism may arise. In a socialist country, such a development is usually only of a localized and temporary nature. This is because

there the exploitation of man by man has been abolished and the interests of the people are basically the same. Such antagonistic actions on a fairly wide scale as took place during the Hungarian events are accounted for by the fact that domestic and foreign counter-revolutionary elements were at work. These actions were also of a temporary, though special, nature. In a case like this, the reactionaries in a socialist country, in league with the imperialists, take advantage of contradictions among the people to foment disunity and dissension and fan the flames of disorder in an attempt to achieve their conspiratorial aims. This lesson of the Hungarian events deserves our attention.

Many people seem to think that the proposal to use democratic methods to resolve contradictions among the people raises a new question. But actually that is not so. Marxists have always held that the cause of the proletariat can only be promoted by relying on the masses of the people; that Communists must use democratic methods of persuasion and education when working among the working people and must on no account resort to commandism or coercion. The Chinese Communist Party faithfully adheres to this Marxist-Leninist principle. We have always maintained that, under the people's democratic dictatorship, two different methods—dictatorial and democratic—should be used to resolve the two different kinds of contradictions—those between ourselves and the enemy and those among the people. This

idea has been explained again and again in our Party documents and in speeches by many responsible Party leaders. In my article "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship" written in 1949, I said: "These two aspects, democracy for the people and dictatorship over the reactionaries, when combined, constitute the people's democratic dictatorship." I also pointed out that, in order to settle questions within the ranks of the people, "the methods we use are democratic, that is, methods of persuasion and not of compulsion." In addressing the Second Session of the National Committee of the People's Political Consultative Conference in June 1950, I said further: "The people's democratic dictatorship uses two methods. In regard to the enemy, it uses the method of dictatorship, that is: it forbids them to take part in political activities for as long a period of time as is necessary; it compels them to obey the laws of the People's Government, compels them to work and to transform themselves into new people through work. In regard to the people, on the contrary, it does not use compulsion, it uses democratic methods, that is: it must allow the people to take part in political activities, and, far from compelling them to do this or that, use the democratic methods of education and persuasion. This education is self-education among the people, and criticism and self-criticism is the fundamental method of self-education." We have spoken on this question of using democratic methods to resolve contradictions among the people on many occasions in the past, and, fur-

thermore, we have in the main acted on this principle, a principle of which many cadres and many people have a practical understanding. Why then do some people now feel that this is a new issue? The reason is that, in the past, an acute struggle raged between ourselves and our enemies both within and without, and contradictions among the people did not attract as much attention as they do today.

Quite a few people fail to make a clear distinction between these two different types of contradictions—those between ourselves and the enemy and those among the people—and are prone to confuse the two. It must be admitted that it is sometimes easy to confuse them. We had instances of such confusion in our past work. In the suppression of counter-revolution, good people were sometimes mistaken for bad. Such things have happened before, and still happen today. We have been able to keep our mistakes within bounds because it has been our policy to draw a sharp line between our own people and our enemies and where mistakes have been made, to take suitable measures of rehabilitation.

Marxist philosophy holds that the law of the unity of opposites is a fundamental law of the universe. This law operates everywhere, in the natural world, in human society, and in man's thinking. Opposites in contradiction unite as well as struggle with each other, and thus impel all things to move and change. Contradictions exist everywhere, but as things differ in nature, so do contradictions. In any given phenom-

enon or thing, the unity of opposites is conditional, temporary and transitory, and hence relative; whereas struggle between opposites is absolute. Lenin gave a very clear exposition of this law. In our country, a growing number of people have come to understand it. For many people, however, acceptance of this law is one thing, and its application in examining and dealing with problems is quite another. Many dare not acknowledge openly that there still exist contradictions among the people, which are the very forces that move our society forward. Many people refuse to admit that contradictions still exist in a socialist society, with the result that when confronted with social contradictions they become timid and helpless. They do not understand that socialist society grows more united and consolidated precisely through the ceaseless process of correctly dealing with and resolving contradictions. For this reason, we need to explain things to our people, our cadres in the first place, to help them understand contradictions in a socialist society and learn how to deal with such contradictions in a correct way.

Contradictions in a socialist society are fundamentally different from contradictions in old societies, such as capitalist society. Contradictions in capitalist society find expression in acute antagonisms and conflicts, in sharp class struggle, which cannot be resolved by the capitalist system itself and can only be resolved by socialist revolution. Contradictions in socialist society are, on the contrary, not antagonistic and can

be resolved one after the other by the socialist system itself.

The basic contradictions in socialist society are still those between the relations of production and the productive forces, and between the superstructure and the economic base. These contradictions, however, are fundamentally different in character and have different features from contradictions between the relations of production and the productive forces and between the superstructure and the economic base in the old societies. The present social system of our country is far superior to that of the old days. If this were not so, the old system would not have been overthrown and the new system could not have been set up. When we say that socialist relations of production are better suited than the old relations of production to the development of the productive forces, we mean that the former permits the productive forces to develop at a speed unparalleled in the old society, so that production can expand steadily and the constantly growing needs of the people can be met step by step. Under the rule of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism, production in old China developed very slowly. For more than fifty years before liberation, China produced only a few score thousand tons of steel a year, not counting the output of the north-eastern provinces. If we include these provinces, the peak annual output of steel of our country was only something over nine hundred thousand tons. In 1949, the country's output of steel

was only something over one hundred thousand tons. Now, only seven years after liberation of the country, our steel output already exceeds four million tons. In old China, there was hardly any engineering industry to speak of; motor-car and aircraft industries were non-existent; now, we have them. When the rule of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism was overthrown by the people, many were not clear as to where China was headed—to capitalism or socialism. Facts give the answer: Only socialism can save China. The socialist system has promoted the rapid development of the productive forces of our country—this is a fact that even our enemies abroad have had to acknowledge.

But our socialist system has just been set up; it is not yet fully established, nor yet fully consolidated. In joint state-private industrial and commercial enterprises, capitalists still receive a fixed rate of interest on their capital, that is to say, exploitation still exists. So far as ownership is concerned, these enterprises are not yet completely socialist in character. Some of our agricultural and handicraft producers' co-operatives are still semi-socialist, while even in the fully socialist co-operatives certain problems about ownership remain to be solved. Relationships in production and exchange are still being gradually established along socialist lines in various sectors of our economy and more and more appropriate forms are being sought. It is a complicated problem to settle on a proper ratio between accumulation and consumption within that

sector of socialist economy in which the means of production are owned by the whole people and that sector in which the means of production are collectively owned, as well as between these two sectors. It is not easy to work out a perfectly rational solution to this problem all at once.

To sum up, socialist relations of production have been established; they are suited to the development of the productive forces, but they are still far from perfect, and their imperfect aspects stand in contradiction to the development of the productive forces. There is conformity as well as contradiction between the relations of production and the development of the productive forces; similarly, there is conformity as well as contradiction between the superstructure and the economic base. The superstructure—our state institutions of people's democratic dictatorship and its laws, and socialist ideology under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism—has played a positive role in facilitating the victory of socialist transformation and establishment of a socialist organization of labour; it is suited to the socialist economic base, that is, socialist relations of production. But survivals of bourgeois ideology, bureaucratic ways of doing things in our state organs, and flaws in certain links of our state institutions stand in contradiction to the economic base of socialism. We must continue to resolve such contradictions in the light of specific conditions. Of course, as these contradictions are resolved, new problems and new

contradictions will emerge and call for solution. For instance, a constant process of readjustment through state planning is needed to deal with the contradiction between production and the needs of society, which will long remain as an objective reality. Every year our country draws up an economic plan in an effort to establish a proper ratio between accumulation and consumption and achieve a balance between production and the needs of society. By "balance" we mean a temporary, relative unity of opposites. By the end of each year, such a balance, taken as a whole, is upset by the struggle of opposites, the unity achieved undergoes a change, balance becomes imbalance, unity becomes disunity, and once again it is necessary to work out a balance and unity for the next year. This is the superior quality of our planned economy. As a matter of fact, this balance and unity is partially upset every month and every quarter, and partial readjustments are called for. Sometimes, because our arrangements do not correspond to objective reality, contradictions arise and the balance is upset; this is what we call making a mistake. Contradictions arise continually and are continually resolved; this is the dialectical law of the development of things.

This is how things stand today: The turbulent class struggles waged by the masses on a large scale characteristic of the revolutionary periods have, in the main, concluded, but class struggle is not entirely over. While the broad masses of the people welcome the new system, they are not yet quite accustomed

to it. Government workers are not sufficiently experienced, and should continue to examine and explore ways of dealing with questions relating to specific policies.

In other words, time is needed for our socialist system to grow and consolidate itself, for the masses to get accustomed to the new system, and for government workers to study and acquire experience. It is imperative that at this juncture we raise the question of distinguishing contradictions among the people from contradictions between ourselves and the enemy, as well as the question of the proper handling of contradictions among the people, so as to rally the people of all nationalities in our country to wage a new battle—the battle against nature—to develop our economy and culture, enable all our people to go through this transition period in a fairly smooth way, make our new system secure, and build up our new state.

2. THE SUPPRESSION OF COUNTER-REVOLUTION

The question of suppressing counter-revolutionaries is a question of the struggle of opposites in the contradiction between ourselves and the enemy. Within the ranks of the people, there are some who hold somewhat different views on this question. There are two kinds of persons whose views differ from ours. Those with a rightist way of thinking make no distinction between ourselves and the enemy

and mistake our enemies for our own people. They regard as friends the very people the broad masses regard as enemies. Those with a "leftist" way of thinking so magnify contradictions between ourselves and the enemy that they mistake certain contradictions among the people for contradictions between ourselves and the enemy, and regard as counter-revolutionaries persons who really aren't. Both these views are wrong. Neither of them will enable us to handle properly the question of suppressing counter-revolution, or to correctly assess the results in this work.

If we want to correctly evaluate the results of our efforts to suppress counter-revolution here, let us see what effect the Hungarian events had in our country. These events caused some of our intellectuals to lose their balance a bit but there were no squalls in our country. Why? One reason, it must be said, was that we had succeeded in suppressing counter-revolution quite thoroughly.

Of course, the consolidation of our state is not primarily due to the suppression of counter-revolution. It is due primarily to the fact that we have a Communist Party and a Liberation Army steeled in decades of revolutionary struggle, as well as a working people which has been similarly steeled. Our Party and our armed forces are rooted in the masses; they have been tempered in the flames of a protracted revolution: they are strong and they can fight. Our People's Republic wasn't built overnight. It de-

veloped step by step out of the revolutionary bases. Some leading democrats have also been tempered in one degree or another in the struggle, and they went through troubled times together with us. Some intellectuals were tempered in the struggles against imperialism and reaction; since liberation many of them have gone through a process of ideological remoulding which was aimed at making a clear distinction between ourselves and the enemy.

In addition, the consolidation of our state is due to the fact that our economic measures are basically sound, that the people's livelihood is secure and is steadily being improved, that our policies towards the national bourgeoisie and other classes are also correct, and so on. Nevertheless, our success in suppressing counter-revolution is undoubtedly an important reason for the consolidation of our state. Because of all this, although many of our college students come from families other than those of the working people, all of them, with few exceptions, are patriotic and support socialism; they didn't give way to unrest during the Hungarian events. The same was true of the national bourgeoisie, to say nothing of the basic masses — the workers and peasants.

After liberation, we rooted out a number of counter-revolutionaries. Some were sentenced to death because they had committed serious crimes. This was absolutely necessary; it was the demand of the people; it was done to free the masses from long years of oppression by counter-revolutionaries and all kinds

of local tyrants; in other words, to set free the productive forces. If we had not done so, the masses would not have been able to lift their heads.

Since 1956, however, there has been a radical change in the situation. Taking the country as a whole, the main force of counter-revolution has been rooted out. Our basic task is no longer to set free the productive forces but to protect and expand them in the context of the new relations of production. Some people do not understand that our present policy fits the present situation and our past policy fitted the past situation; they want to make use of the present policy to reverse decisions on past cases and to deny the great success we achieved in suppressing counter-revolution. This is quite wrong, and the people will not permit it.

As regards the suppression of counter-revolution, the main thing is that we have achieved successes, but mistakes have also been made. There were excesses in some cases and in other cases counter-revolutionaries were overlooked. Our policy is: "Counter-revolutionaries must be suppressed whenever they are found, mistakes must be corrected whenever they are discovered." The line we adopted in this work was the mass line, that is, the suppression of counter-revolution by the people themselves. Of course, even with the adoption of this line, mistakes will still occur in our work, but they will be fewer and easier to correct. The masses have gained experience through this struggle. From what was done correctly they learned how things should be done. From what was done

wrong they learned useful lessons as to why mistakes were made.

Steps have been or are being taken to correct mistakes which have already been discovered in the work of suppressing counter-revolutionaries. Those not yet discovered will be corrected as soon as they come to light. Decisions on exoneration and rehabilitation should receive the same measure of publicity as the original mistaken decisions. I propose that a comprehensive review of the work of suppressing counter-revolution be made this year or next to sum up experience, foster a spirit of righteousness and combat unhealthy tendencies. Nationally, this task should be handled by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and the Standing Committee of the People's Political Consultative Conference; and locally, by the provincial and municipal people's councils and committees of the People's Political Consultative Conference. In this review, we must help and not pour cold water on the large numbers of functionaries and activists who took part in the work. It is not right to dampen their spirits. Nonetheless, wrongs must be righted when they are discovered. This must be the attitude of all the public security organs, the procuracies and the judicial departments, prisons or agencies charged with the reform of criminals through labour. We hope that wherever possible members of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and of the People's Political Consultative Conference and the people's deputies will all take part in this re-

view. This will be of help in perfecting our legal system and also in dealing correctly with counter-revolutionaries and other criminals.

The present situation with regard to counter-revolutionaries can be stated in these words: There still are counter-revolutionaries, but not many. In the first place, there still are counter-revolutionaries. Some people say that there aren't any and that all is at peace; that we can pile up our pillows and just go to sleep. But this is not the way things are. The fact is that there still are counter-revolutionaries (this, of course, is not to say you'll find them everywhere and in every organization), and we must continue to fight them. It must be understood that the hidden counter-revolutionaries still at large will not take it lying down, but will certainly seize every opportunity to make trouble, and that the United States imperialists and the Chiang Kai-shek clique are constantly sending in secret agents to carry on wrecking activities. Even when all the counter-revolutionaries in existence have been rooted out, new ones may emerge. If we drop our guard we shall be badly fooled and suffer for it severely. Whenever counter-revolutionaries are found making trouble, they should be rooted out with a firm hand. But, of course, taking the country as a whole, there are certainly not many counter-revolutionaries. It would be wrong to say that there are still large numbers of counter-revolutionaries at large. Acceptance of that view will also breed confusion.

3. AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATION

We have a farm population of over five hundred million, so the situation of our peasants has a very important bearing on the development of our economy and the consolidation of our state power. In my view, the situation is basically sound. The organization of agricultural co-operatives has been successfully completed and this has solved a major contradiction in our country — that between socialist industrialization and individual farm economy. The organization of co-operatives was completed swiftly, and so some people were worried that something untoward might occur. Some things did go wrong but, fortunately, they were not so serious. The movement on the whole is healthy. The peasants are working with a will and last year, despite the worst floods, droughts and typhoons in years, they were still able to increase the output of food crops. Yet some people have stirred up a miniature typhoon: they are grouching that co-operative farming won't do, that it has no superior qualities. Does agricultural co-operation possess superior qualities or does it not? Among the documents distributed at today's meeting is one concerning the Wang Kuo-fan Co-operative in Tsunhua County, Hopei Province, which I suggest you read. This co-operative is situated in a hilly region which was very poor in the past and depended on relief grain sent there every year by the People's Government. When the co-operative was first set up in 1953, people called it the "paupers' co-op."

But as a result of four years of hard struggle, it has become better off year by year, and now most of its households have reserves of grain. What this co-operative could do, other co-operatives should also be able to do under normal conditions, even if it may take a bit longer. It is clear then that there are no grounds for the view that something has gone wrong with the co-operative movement.

It is also clear that it takes a hard struggle to build up co-operatives. New things always have difficulties and ups and downs to get over as they grow. It would be sheer fancy to imagine that building socialism is all plain sailing and easy success, that one won't meet difficulties or setbacks or need not make tremendous efforts.

Who are the staunch supporters of the co-operatives? They are the overwhelming majority of the poor peasants and lower middle peasants. These together account for more than seventy per cent of the rural population. Most of the rest also cherish hopes for the future of the co-operatives. Only a very small minority are really dissatisfied. But quite a number of persons have failed to analyse this situation. They have not made a comprehensive study of the achievements and shortcomings of the co-operatives and the causes of these shortcomings; they take part of the picture for the whole. And so, among some people a miniature typhoon has whirled up around what they call the co-operatives having no superior qualities.

How long will it take to consolidate the co-operatives and end these arguments about their not having any superior qualities? Judging from the actual experience of many co-operatives, this will probably take five years or a bit longer. As most of our co-operatives are only a little over a year old, it would be unreasonable to expect too much from them so soon. In my view, we'll be doing well enough if we succeed in establishing the co-operatives during the period of the First Five-Year Plan and consolidating them during the Second.

The co-operatives are steadily being consolidated. Certain contradictions remain to be resolved, such as those between the state and the co-operatives, and those within and between the co-operatives themselves.

In resolving these contradictions we must keep problems of production and distribution constantly in mind. Take the question of production. On the one hand, the co-operative economy must be subject to the unified economic planning of the state but at the same time it should be allowed to retain a certain leeway and independence of action without prejudice to unified state planning or the policies and laws and regulations of the state. On the other hand, every household in a co-operative can make its own plans in regard to land reserved for private use and other economic undertakings left to private management, but it must comply with the overall plans of the co-operative or production team to which it belongs.

On the question of distribution, we must take into account the interests of the state, the co-operative, and the individual. We must find the correct way to handle the three-way relationship between the tax revenue of the state, accumulation of funds in the co-operative and the personal income of the peasant, and pay constant attention to making readjustments so as to resolve contradictions as they arise. Accumulation is essential for both the state and the co-operative, but in neither case should this be overdone. We should do everything possible to enable the peasants in normal years to raise their personal incomes year by year on the basis of increased production.

Many people say that the peasants lead a hard life. Is this true? In one sense, it is. That is to say, because the imperialists and their agents oppressed, exploited and impoverished our country for over a century, the standard of living not only of our peasants but of our workers and intellectuals as well is still low. We will need several decades of intensive efforts to raise the standard of living of our entire people step by step. In this sense, "hard" is the right word. But from another point of view, it is not right to say "hard." We refer to the allegation that, in the seven years since liberation, the life of the workers has improved but not that of the peasants. As a matter of fact, with very few exceptions, both the workers and the peasants are better off than before. Since liberation, the peasants have rid themselves of landlord exploitation, and their production has increased year by

year. Take the case of food crops. In 1949, the country's output was only something over 210,000 million catties. By 1956, it had risen to something over 360,000 million catties, an increase of nearly 150,000 million catties. The state agricultural tax is not heavy, amounting only to some 30,000 million catties a year. Grain bought from the peasants at normal prices only amounts to something over 50,000 million catties a year. These two items together total over 80,000 million catties. More than one half of this grain, furthermore, is sold in the villages and nearby towns. Obviously one cannot say that there has been no improvement in the life of the peasants. We are prepared to stabilize over a number of years the total amount of the grain tax and the amount of grain purchased by the state at approximately something over 80,000 million catties a year. This will help promote the development of agriculture, and consolidate the co-operatives; the small number of grain-short households still found in the countryside will no longer go short; so that with the exception of certain peasants who grow industrial crops, all peasant households will then have reserves of food grain or at least become self-sufficient; in this way there will be no more poor peasants and the standard of living of all the peasants will reach or surpass the level of that of the middle peasants. It's not right to make a superficial comparison between the average annual income of a peasant and that of a worker and draw the conclusion that the one is too low and the other too high. The productivity of the workers is

much higher than that of the peasants, while the cost of living for the peasants is much lower than that for workers in the cities; so it cannot be said that the workers receive special favours from the state. However, the wages of a small number of workers and some government personnel are rather too high, the peasants have reason to be dissatisfied with this, so it is necessary to make certain appropriate readjustments in the light of specific circumstances.

4. THE QUESTION OF INDUSTRIALISTS AND BUSINESS MEN

The year 1956 saw the transformation of privately owned industrial and commercial enterprises into joint state-private enterprises as well as the organization of co-operatives in agriculture and handicrafts as part of the transformation of our social system. The speed and smoothness with which this was carried out are closely related to the fact that we treated the contradiction between the working class and the national bourgeoisie as a contradiction among the people. Has this class contradiction been resolved completely? No, not yet. A considerable period of time is still required to do so. However, some people say that the capitalists have been so remoulded that they are now not much different from the workers, and that further remoulding is unnecessary. Others go so far as to say that the capitalists are even a bit better than the workers. Still others ask, if remoulding is necessary, why

doesn't the working class undergo remoulding? Are these opinions correct? Of course not.

In building a socialist society, all need remoulding, the exploiters as well as the working people. Who says the working class doesn't need it? Of course, remoulding of the exploiters and that of the working people are two different types of remoulding. The two must not be confused. In the class struggle and the struggle against nature, the working class remoulds the whole of society, and at the same time remoulds itself. It must continue to learn in the process of its work and step by step overcome its shortcomings. It must never stop doing so. Take us who are present here for example. Many of us make some progress each year; that is to say, we are being remoulded each year. I myself had all sorts of non-Marxist ideas before. It was only later that I embraced Marxism. I learned a little Marxism from books and so made an initial remoulding of my ideas, but it was mainly through taking part in the class struggle over the years that I came to be remoulded. And I must continue to study if I am to make further progress, otherwise I shall lag behind. Can the capitalists be so clever as to need no more remoulding?

Some contend that the Chinese bourgeoisie no longer has two sides to its character, but only one side. Is this true? No. On the one hand, members of the bourgeoisie have already become managerial personnel in joint state-private enterprises and are being transformed from exploiters into working people living by

their own labour. On the other hand, they still receive a fixed rate of interest on their investments in the joint enterprises, that is, they have not yet cut themselves loose from the roots of exploitation. Between them and the working class there is still a considerable gap in ideology, sentiments and habits of life. How can it be said that they no longer have two sides to their character? Even when they stop receiving their fixed interest payments and rid themselves of the label "bourgeoisie," they will still need ideological remoulding for quite some time. If it were held that the bourgeoisie no longer has a dual character, then such study and remoulding for the capitalists would no longer be needed.

But it must be said that such a view doesn't tally with the actual circumstances of our industrialists and business men, nor with what most of them want. During the past few years, most of them have been willing to study and have made marked progress. Our industrialists and business men can be thoroughly remoulded only in the course of work; they should work together with the staff and workers in the enterprises, and make the enterprises the chief centres for remoulding themselves. It is also important for them to change certain of their old views through study. Study for them should be optional. After they have attended study groups for some weeks, many industrialists and business men, on returning to their enterprises, find they speak more of a common language with the workers and the representatives of state shareholdings, and

so work better together. They know from personal experience that it is good for them to keep on studying and remoulding themselves. The idea just referred to that study and remoulding are not necessary does not reflect the views of the majority of industrialists and business men. Only a small number of them think that way.

5. THE QUESTION OF INTELLECTUALS

Contradictions within the ranks of the people in our country also find expression among our intellectuals. Several million intellectuals who worked for the old society have come to serve the new society. The question that now arises is how they can best meet the needs of the new society and how we can help them do so. This is also a contradiction among the people.

Most of our intellectuals have made marked progress during the past seven years. They express themselves in favour of the socialist system. Many of them are diligently studying Marxism, and some have become Communists. Their number, though small, is growing steadily. There are, of course, still some intellectuals who are sceptical of socialism or who do not approve of it, but they are in a minority.

China needs as many intellectuals as she can get to carry through the colossal task of socialist construction. We should trust intellectuals who are really willing to serve the cause of socialism, radically improve our relations with them and help them solve

whatever problems that have to be solved, so that they can give full play to their talents. Many of our comrades are not good at getting along with intellectuals. They are stiff with them, lack respect for their work, and interfere in scientific and cultural matters in a way that is uncalled for. We must do away with all such shortcomings.

Our intellectuals have made some progress, but they should not be complacent. They must continue to remould themselves, gradually shed their bourgeois world outlook and acquire a proletarian, communist world outlook so that they can fully meet the needs of the new society and closely unite with the workers and peasants. This change in world outlook is a fundamental one, and up till now it cannot yet be said that most of our intellectuals have accomplished it. We hope that they will continue making progress, and, in the course of work and study, gradually acquire a communist world outlook, get a better grasp of Marxism-Leninism, and identify themselves with the workers and peasants. We hope they will not stop halfway, or, what is worse, slip back; for if they do they will find themselves in a blind alley.

Since the social system of our country has changed and the economic basis of bourgeois ideology has in the main been destroyed, it is not only necessary but also possible for large numbers of our intellectuals to change their world outlook. But a thorough change in world outlook takes quite a long time, and we should go about it patiently and not be impetuous. Actually

there are bound to be some who are all along reluctant, ideologically, to accept Marxism-Leninism and communism. We should not be too exacting in what we expect of them; as long as they comply with the requirements of the state and engage in legitimate pursuits, we should give them opportunities for suitable work.

There has been a falling off recently in ideological and political work among students and intellectuals, and some unhealthy tendencies have appeared. Some people apparently think that there is no longer any need to concern themselves about politics, the future of their motherland and the ideals of mankind. It seems as if Marxism that was once all the rage is not so much in fashion now. This being the case, we must improve our ideological and political work. Both students and intellectuals should study hard. In addition to specialized subjects, they should study Marxism-Leninism, current events and political affairs in order to progress both ideologically and politically. Not to have a correct political point of view is like having no soul. Ideological remoulding in the past was necessary and has yielded positive results. But it was carried on in a somewhat rough and ready way and the feelings of some people were hurt — this was not good. We must avoid such shortcomings in future. All departments and organizations concerned should take up their responsibilities with regard to ideological and political work. This applies to the Communist Party, the Youth League, government departments respon-

sible for this work, and especially heads of educational institutions and teachers. Our educational policy must enable everyone who gets an education, to develop morally, intellectually and physically and become a cultured, socialist-minded worker. We must spread the idea of building our country through hard work and thrift. We must see to it that all our young people understand that ours is still a very poor country, that we can't change this situation radically in a short time, and that only through the united efforts of our younger generation and all our people working with their own hands can our country be made strong and prosperous within a period of several decades. It is true that the establishment of our socialist system has opened the road leading to the ideal state of the future, but we must work hard, very hard indeed, if we are to make that ideal a reality. Some of our young people think that everything ought to be perfect once a socialist society is established and that they should be able to enjoy a happy life, ready-made, without working for it. This is unrealistic.

6. THE QUESTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

The people of the national minorities in our country number more than thirty million. Although they constitute only six per cent of China's total population, they inhabit regions which altogether comprise fifty to sixty per cent of the country's total area. It is therefore imperative to foster good relations between the

Han people and the national minorities. The key to the solution of this question lies in overcoming great-Han chauvinism. At the same time, where local nationalism exists among national minorities, measures should be taken to overcome it. Neither great-Han chauvinism nor local nationalism can do any good to unity among the nationalities, and they should both be overcome as contradictions among the people. We have already done some work in this sphere. In most areas inhabited by national minorities, there has been a big improvement in relations among the nationalities, but a number of problems remain to be solved. In certain places, both great-Han chauvinism and local nationalism still exist in a serious degree, and this calls for our close attention. As a result of the efforts of the people of all the nationalities over the past few years, democratic reforms and socialist transformation have in the main been completed in most of the national minority areas. Because conditions in Tibet are not ripe, democratic reforms have not yet been carried out there. According to the seventeen-point agreement reached between the Central People's Government and the local government of Tibet, reform of the social system must eventually be carried out. But we should not be impatient; when this will be done can only be decided when the great majority of the people of Tibet and their leading public figures consider it practicable. It has now been decided not to proceed with democratic reform in Tibet during the period of the Second Five-Year Plan, and we can only

decide whether it will be done in the period of the Third Five-Year Plan in the light of the situation obtaining at that time.

7. OVERALL PLANNING, ALL-ROUND CONSIDERATION AND PROPER ARRANGEMENTS

The "overall planning and all-round consideration" mentioned here refers to overall planning and all-round consideration for the interests of the six hundred million people of our country. In drawing up plans, handling affairs or thinking over problems, we must proceed from the fact that China has a population of six hundred million people. This must never be forgotten.

Now, why should we make a point of this? Could it be that there are people who still do not know that we have a population of six hundred million? Of course, everyone knows this, but in actual practice some are apt to forget it and act as if they thought that the fewer people and the smaller their world the better. Those who have this "exclusive-club" mentality resist the idea of bringing all positive factors into play, of rallying everyone that can be rallied, and of doing everything possible to turn negative factors into positive ones serving the great cause of building a socialist society. I hope these people will take a wider view and really recognize the fact that we have a population of six hundred million, that this is an objective fact, and that this is our asset.

We have this large population. It is a good thing, but of course it also has its difficulties. Construction is going ahead vigorously on all fronts; we have achieved much, but in the present transitional period of tremendous social change we are still beset by many difficult problems. Progress and difficulties — this is a contradiction. However, all contradictions not only should, but can be resolved. Our guiding principle is overall planning and all-round consideration, and proper arrangements. No matter whether it is the question of food, natural calamities, employment, education, the intellectuals, the united front of all patriotic forces, the national minorities, or any other question — we must always proceed from the standpoint of overall planning and all-round consideration for the whole people; we must make whatever arrangements are suitable and possible at the particular time and place and after consultation with all those concerned. On no account should we throw matters out the back door, go around grumbling that there are too many people, that people are backward, and that things are troublesome and hard to handle.

Does that mean that everyone and everything should be taken care of by the government alone? Of course not. Social organizations and the masses themselves can work out ways and means to take care of many matters involving people and things. They are quite capable of devising many good ways of doing so. This also comes within the scope of the principle of “overall planning, all-round consideration and

proper arrangements.” We should give guidance to social organizations and the masses of the people everywhere in taking such action.

**8. ON “LETTING A HUNDRED FLOWERS BLOSSOM,”
AND “LETTING A HUNDRED SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT
CONTEND,”* AND “LONG-TERM CO-EXISTENCE AND
MUTUAL SUPERVISION”**

“Let a hundred flowers blossom,” and “let a hundred schools of thought contend,” “long-term co-existence and mutual supervision”—how did these slogans come to be put forward?

They were put forward in the light of the specific conditions existing in China, on the basis of the recognition that various kinds of contradictions still exist in a socialist society, and in response to the country’s urgent need to speed up its economic and cultural development.

The policy of letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend is designed to promote the flourishing of the arts and the progress of science; it is designed to enable a socialist culture to thrive in our land. Different forms and styles in art can develop freely and different schools in science can contend freely. We think that it is harmful to

* “Let a hundred flowers blossom.” and “let a hundred schools of thought contend” are two old Chinese sayings. The word “hundred” does not mean literally the number as such, but simply “numerous.”—Translator.

the growth of art and science if administrative measures are used to impose one particular style of art or school of thought and to ban another. Questions of right and wrong in the arts and sciences should be settled through free discussion in artistic and scientific circles and in the course of practical work in the arts and sciences. They should not be settled in summary fashion. A period of trial is often needed to determine whether something is right or wrong. In the past, new and correct things often failed at the outset to win recognition from the majority of people and had to develop by twists and turns in struggle. Correct and good things have often at first been looked upon not as fragrant flowers but as poisonous weeds. Copernicus' theory of the solar system and Darwin's theory of evolution were once dismissed as erroneous and had to win through over bitter opposition. Chinese history offers many similar examples. In socialist society, conditions for the growth of new things are radically different from and far superior to those in the old society. Nevertheless, it still often happens that new, rising forces are held back and reasonable suggestions smothered.

The growth of new things can also be hindered, not because of deliberate suppression, but because of lack of discernment. That is why we should take a cautious attitude in regard to questions of right and wrong in the arts and sciences, encourage free discussion, and avoid hasty conclusions. We believe

that this attitude will facilitate the growth of the arts and sciences.

Marxism has also developed through struggle. At the beginning, Marxism was subjected to all kinds of attack and regarded as a poisonous weed. It is still being attacked and regarded as a poisonous weed in many parts of the world. However, it enjoys a different position in the socialist countries. But even in these countries, there are non-Marxist as well as anti-Marxist ideologies. It is true that in China, socialist transformation, in so far as a change in the system of ownership is concerned, has in the main been completed, and the turbulent, large-scale, mass class struggles characteristic of the revolutionary periods have in the main concluded. But remnants of the overthrown landlord and comprador classes still exist, the bourgeoisie still exists, and the petty bourgeoisie has only just begun to remould itself. Class struggle is not yet over. The class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the class struggle between various political forces, and the class struggle in the ideological field between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie will still be long and devious and at times may even become very acute. The proletariat seeks to transform the world according to its own world outlook, so does the bourgeoisie. In this respect, the question whether socialism or capitalism will win is still not really settled. Marxists are still a minority of the entire population as well as of the intellectuals. Marxism therefore must still develop

through struggle. Marxism can only develop through struggle — this is true not only in the past and present, it is necessarily true in the future also. What is correct always develops in the course of struggle with what is wrong. The true, the good and the beautiful always exist in comparison with the false, the evil and the ugly, and grow in struggle with the latter. As mankind in general rejects an untruth and accepts a truth, a new truth will begin struggling with new erroneous ideas. Such struggles will never end. This is the law of development of truth and it is certainly also the law of development of Marxism.

It will take a considerable time to decide the issue in the ideological struggle between socialism and capitalism in our country. This is because the influence of the bourgeoisie and of the intellectuals who come from the old society will remain in our country as the ideology of a class for a long time to come. Failure to grasp this, or still worse, failure to understand it at all, can lead to the gravest mistakes — to ignoring the necessity of waging the struggle in the ideological field. Ideological struggle is not like other forms of struggle. Crude, coercive methods should not be used in this struggle, but only the method of painstaking reasoning. Today, socialism enjoys favourable conditions in the ideological struggle. The main power of the state is in the hands of the working people led by the proletariat. The Communist Party is strong and its prestige stands high. Although there are defects and mistakes in our work, every fair-

minded person can see that we are loyal to the people, that we are both determined and able to build up our country together with the people, and that we have achieved great successes and will achieve still greater ones. The vast majority of the bourgeoisie and intellectuals who come from the old society are patriotic; they are willing to serve their flourishing socialist motherland, and they know that if they turn away from the socialist cause and the working people led by the Communist Party, they will have no one to rely on and no bright future to look forward to.

People may ask: Since Marxism is accepted by the majority of the people in our country as the guiding ideology, can it be criticized? Certainly it can. As a scientific truth, Marxism fears no criticism. If it did, and could be defeated in argument, it would be worthless. In fact, aren't the idealists criticizing Marxism every day and in all sorts of ways? As for those who harbour bourgeois and petty bourgeois ideas and do not wish to change, aren't they also criticizing Marxism in all sorts of ways? Marxists should not be afraid of criticism from any quarter. Quite the contrary, they need to steel and improve themselves and win new positions in the teeth of criticism and the storm and stress of struggle. Fighting against wrong ideas is like being vaccinated — a man develops greater immunity from disease after the vaccine takes effect. Plants raised in hot-houses are not likely to be robust. Carrying out the policy of letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought

contend will not weaken but strengthen the leading position of Marxism in the ideological field.

What should our policy be towards non-Marxist ideas? As far as unmistakable counter-revolutionaries and wreckers of the socialist cause are concerned, the matter is easy: we simply deprive them of their freedom of speech. But it is quite a different matter when we are faced with incorrect ideas among the people. Will it do to ban such ideas and give them no opportunity to express themselves? Certainly not. It is not only futile but very harmful to use crude and summary methods to deal with ideological questions among the people, with questions relating to the spiritual life of man. You may ban the expression of wrong ideas, but the ideas will still be there. On the other hand, correct ideas, if pampered in hot-houses without being exposed to the elements or immunized from disease, will not win out against wrong ones. That is why it is only by employing methods of discussion, criticism and reasoning that we can really foster correct ideas, overcome wrong ideas, and really settle issues.

The bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie are bound to give expression to their ideologies. It is inevitable that they should stubbornly persist in expressing themselves in every way possible on political and ideological questions. You can't expect them not to do so. We should not use methods of suppression to prevent them from expressing themselves, but should

allow them to do so and at the same time argue with them and direct well-considered criticism at them.

There can be no doubt that we should criticize all kinds of wrong ideas. It certainly would not do to refrain from criticism and look on while wrong ideas spread unchecked and acquire their market. Mistakes should be criticized and poisonous weeds fought against wherever they crop up. But such criticism should not be doctrinaire. We should not use the metaphysical method, but strive to employ the dialectical method. What is needed is scientific analysis and fully convincing arguments. Doctrinaire criticism settles nothing. We don't want any kind of poisonous weeds, but we should carefully distinguish between what is really a poisonous weed and what is really a fragrant flower. We must learn together with the masses of the people how to make this careful distinction, and use the correct methods to fight poisonous weeds.

While criticizing doctrinairism, we should at the same time direct our attention to criticizing revisionism. Revisionism, or rightist opportunism, is a bourgeois trend of thought which is even more dangerous than doctrinairism. The revisionists, or right opportunists, pay lip-service to Marxism and also attack "doctrinairism." But the real target of their attack is actually the most fundamental elements of Marxism. They oppose or distort materialism and dialectics, oppose or try to weaken the people's democratic dictatorship and the leading role of the Communist Party,

oppose or try to weaken socialist transformation and socialist construction. Even after the basic victory of the socialist revolution in our country, there are still a number of people who vainly hope for a restoration of the capitalist system. They wage a struggle against the working class on every front, including the ideological front. In this struggle, their right-hand men are the revisionists.

On the surface, these two slogans — let a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend — have no class character: the proletariat can turn them to account, so can the bourgeoisie and other people. But different classes, strata and social groups each have their own views on what are fragrant flowers and what are poisonous weeds. So what, from the point of view of the broad masses of the people, should be the criteria today for distinguishing between fragrant flowers and poisonous weeds?

In the political life of our country, how are our people to determine what is right and what is wrong in our words and actions? Basing ourselves on the principles of our Constitution, the will of the overwhelming majority of our people and the political programmes jointly proclaimed on various occasions by our political parties and groups, we believe that, broadly speaking, words and actions can be judged right if they:

(1) Help to unite the people of our various nationalities, and do not divide them;

(2) Are beneficial, not harmful, to socialist transformation and socialist construction;

(3) Help to consolidate, not undermine or weaken, the people's democratic dictatorship;

(4) Help to consolidate, not undermine or weaken, democratic centralism;

(5) Tend to strengthen, not to cast off or weaken, the leadership of the Communist Party;

(6) Are beneficial, not harmful, to international socialist solidarity and the solidarity of the peace-loving peoples of the world.

Of these six criteria, the most important are the socialist path and the leadership of the Party. These criteria are put forward in order to foster, and not hinder, the free discussion of various questions among the people. Those who do not approve of these criteria can still put forward their own views and argue their case. When the majority of the people have clear-cut criteria to go by, criticism and self-criticism can be conducted along proper lines, and these criteria can be applied to people's words and actions to determine whether they are fragrant flowers or poisonous weeds. These are political criteria. Naturally, in judging the truthfulness of scientific theories or assessing the aesthetic value of works of art, other pertinent criteria are needed, but these six political criteria are also applicable to all activities in the arts or sciences. In a socialist country like ours, can there possibly be any useful scientific or artistic activity which runs counter to these political criteria?

All that is set out above stems from the specific historical conditions in our country. Since conditions vary in different socialist countries and with different Communist Parties, we do not think that other countries and Parties must or need to follow the Chinese way.

The slogan "long-term co-existence and mutual supervision" is also a product of specific historical conditions in our country. It wasn't put forward all of a sudden, but had been in the making for several years. The idea of long-term co-existence had been in existence for a long time, but last year when the socialist system was basically established, the slogan was set out in clear terms.

Why should the democratic parties of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie be allowed to exist side by side with the party of the working class over a long period of time? Because we have no reason not to adopt the policy of long-term co-existence with all other democratic parties which are truly devoted to the task of uniting the people for the cause of socialism and which enjoy the trust of the people.

As early as at the Second Session of the National Committee of the People's Political Consultative Conference in June 1950, I put the matter in this way:

"The people and the People's Government have no reason to reject or deny the opportunity to anyone to make a living and give their services to the country, so long as he is really willing to serve the people, really helped the people when they were still in diffi-

culties, did good things and continues to do them consistently without giving up halfway."

What I defined here was the political basis for the long-term co-existence of the various parties. It is the desire of the Communist Party, also its policy, to exist side by side with the other democratic parties for a long time to come. Whether these democratic parties can long exist depends not merely on what the Communist Party itself desires but also on the part played by these democratic parties themselves and on whether they enjoy the confidence of the people.

Mutual supervision among the various parties has also been a long-established fact, in the sense that they advise and criticize each other. Mutual supervision, which is obviously not a one-sided matter, means that the Communist Party should exercise supervision over the other democratic parties, and the other democratic parties should exercise supervision over the Communist Party. Why should the other democratic parties be allowed to exercise supervision over the Communist Party? This is because for a party as much as for an individual there is great need to hear opinions different from its own. We all know that supervision over the Communist Party is mainly exercised by the working people and Party membership. But we will benefit even more if the other democratic parties do this as well. Of course, advice and criticism exchanged between the Communist Party and the other democratic parties will play a

positive role in mutual supervision only when they conform to the six political criteria given above. That is why we hope that the other democratic parties will all pay attention to ideological remoulding, and strive for long-term co-existence and mutual supervision with the Communist Party so as to meet the needs of the new society.

9. CONCERNING DISTURBANCES CREATED BY SMALL NUMBERS OF PEOPLE

In 1956, small numbers of workers and students in certain places went on strike. The immediate cause of these disturbances was the failure to satisfy certain of their demands for material benefits, of which some should and could be met, while others were out of place or excessive and therefore could not be met for the time being. But a more important cause was bureaucracy on the part of those in positions of leadership. In some cases, responsibility for such bureaucratic mistakes should be placed on the higher authorities, and those at lower levels should not be made to bear all the blame. Another cause for these disturbances was that the ideological and political educational work done among the workers and students was inadequate. In the same year, members of a small number of agricultural co-operatives also created disturbances, and the main causes were also bureaucracy on the part of the leadership and lack of educational work among the masses.

It should be admitted that all too often some people are prone to concentrate on immediate, partial and personal interests, they do not understand or do not sufficiently understand long-range, nation-wide and collective interests. Because of their lack of experience in political and social life, quite a number of young people can't make a proper comparison between the old and new China; it is not easy for them to thoroughly comprehend what hardships the people of our country went through in the struggle to free themselves from oppression by the imperialists and Kuomintang reactionaries, or what a long period of painstaking work is needed before a happy socialist society can be established. That is why political educational work should be kept going among the masses in an interesting and effective way. We should always tell them the facts about the difficulties that have cropped up and discuss with them how to solve these difficulties.

We do not approve of disturbances, because contradictions among the people can be resolved in accordance with the formula "unity — criticism — unity," while disturbances inevitably cause losses and are detrimental to the advance of socialism. We believe that our people stand for socialism, that they uphold discipline and are reasonable, and will not create disturbances without reason. But this does not mean that in our country there is no possibility of the masses creating disturbances. With regard to this question, we should pay attention to the following:

(1) In order to get rid of the root cause of disturbances, we must stamp out bureaucracy, greatly improve ideological and political education, and deal with all contradictions in a proper way. If this is done, there won't usually be any disturbances.

(2) If disturbances should occur as a result of bad work on our part, then we should guide those involved in such disturbances on to the correct path, make use of these disturbances as a special means of improving our work and educating the cadres and the masses, and work out solutions to those questions which have been neglected in the past. In handling any disturbances, we should work painstakingly, and should not use over-simplified methods, nor declare the matter closed before it is thoroughly settled. The guiding spirits in disturbances should not be removed from their jobs or expelled without good reason, except for those who have committed criminal offences or active counter-revolutionaries who should be dealt with according to law. In a big country like ours, it is nothing to get alarmed about if small numbers of people should create disturbances; rather we should turn such things to advantage to help us get rid of bureaucracy.

In our society, there is also a small number of people who are unmindful of public interests, refuse to listen to reason, commit crimes and break the law. They may take advantage of our policies and distort them, deliberately put forward unreasonable demands in order to stir up the masses, or deliberately spread

rumours to create trouble and disrupt social order. We do not propose to let these people have their way. On the contrary, proper legal action must be taken against them. The masses demand that these persons be punished. Not to do so will run counter to popular will.

10. CAN BAD THINGS BE TURNED INTO GOOD THINGS?

As I have said, in our society, it is bad when groups of people make disturbances, and we do not approve of it. But when disturbances do occur, they force us to learn lessons from them, to overcome bureaucracy and educate the cadres and the people. In this sense, bad things can be turned into good things. Disturbances thus have a dual character. All kinds of disturbances can be looked at in this way.

It is clear to everybody that the Hungarian events were not a good thing. But they too had a dual character. Because our Hungarian comrades took proper action in the course of these events, what was a bad thing turned ultimately into a good thing. The Hungarian state is now more firmly established than ever, and all other countries in the socialist camp have also learned a lesson.

Similarly, the world-wide anti-Communist and anti-popular campaign launched in the latter half of 1956 was of course a bad thing. But it educated and steeled the Communist Parties and the working class in all countries, and thus turned out to be a good thing.

In the storm and stress of this period, a number of people resigned from the Communist Parties in many countries. Resignations from the Party reduce Party membership and are, of course, a bad thing, but there is a good side to this also. Since the vacillating elements unwilling to carry on have withdrawn, the great majority of staunch Party members are more firmly united for the struggle. Isn't this a good thing?

In short, we must learn to take an all-round view of things, seeing not only the positive side of things but also the negative side. Under specific conditions, a bad thing can lead to good results and a good thing to bad results. More than two thousand years ago Lao Tzu said: "It is upon bad fortune that good fortune leans, upon good fortune that bad fortune rests." When the Japanese struck into China, they called this a victory. Huge areas of China's territory were seized, and the Chinese called this a defeat. But China's defeat carried within it the seeds of victory, and Japan's victory carried within it the seeds of defeat. Hasn't this been proved by history?

People all over the world are now discussing whether or not a third world war will break out. In regard to this question, we must be psychologically prepared, and at the same time take an analytical view. We stand resolutely for peace and oppose war. But if the imperialists insist on unleashing another war, we should not be afraid of it. Our attitude on this question is the same as our attitude towards all dis-

turbances: firstly, we are against it; secondly, we are not afraid of it.

The First World War was followed by the birth of the Soviet Union with a population of 200 million. The Second World War was followed by the emergence of the socialist camp with a combined population of 900 million. If the imperialists should insist on launching a third world war, it is certain that several hundred million more will turn to socialism; then there will not be much room left in the world for the imperialists, while it is quite likely that the whole structure of imperialism will utterly collapse.

Given specific conditions, the two aspects of a contradiction invariably turn into their respective opposites as a result of the struggle between them. Here, the conditions are important. Without specific conditions, neither of the two contradictory aspects can transform itself into its opposite. Of all the classes in the world the proletariat is the most eager to change its position; next comes the semi-proletariat, for the former possesses nothing at all, while the latter is not much better off. The present situation in which the United States controls a majority in the United Nations and dominates many parts of the world is a transient one, which will eventually be changed. China's situation as a poor country denied her rights in international affairs will also be changed — a poor country will be changed into a rich country, a country denied her rights into a country enjoying her rights — a transformation of things into

their opposites. Here, the decisive conditions are the socialist system and the concerted efforts of a united people.

11. THE PRACTICE OF ECONOMY

Here I wish to speak briefly on practising economy. We want to carry on large-scale construction, but our country is still very poor — herein lies a contradiction. One way of resolving this contradiction is to make a sustained effort to practise strict economy in every field.

During the *san fan* movement in 1952, we fought against corruption, waste and bureaucracy, and the emphasis was on combating corruption. In 1955 we advocated the practice of economy with considerable success; our emphasis then was on combating unduly high standards for non-productive projects in capital construction, and economy in the use of raw materials in industrial production. But at that time economy as a guiding principle was not conscientiously carried out in all branches of the national economy, nor in government offices, army units, schools and people's organizations in general. This year we have called for economy and elimination of waste in every respect throughout the country.

We still lack experience in construction. During the past few years great successes have been achieved, but there has also been waste. We must gradually build a number of large-scale modern enterprises as

the mainstay of our industries; without these we shall not be able to turn our country into a modern industrial power in several decades. But the majority of our enterprises should not be built in this way; we should set up a far greater number of small and medium enterprises and make full use of the industries inherited from the old society, so as to effect the greatest economy and do more things with less money. Since the principle of practising strict economy and combating waste was put forward in more emphatic terms than before by the Second Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in November 1956, good results have been obtained. This economy drive must be carried out in a thorough, sustained way. Just as it is with criticism of our other faults and mistakes, combating waste is like washing our face. Don't people wash their faces every day? The Chinese Communist Party, the other democratic parties, democrats not affiliated to any party, intellectuals, industrialists and business men, workers, peasants and handicraftsmen — in short, all the 600 million people of our country — must increase production, practise economy, and combat extravagance and waste. This is of first importance both economically and politically. A dangerous tendency has shown itself of late among many of our personnel — an unwillingness to share the joys and hardships of the masses, a concern for personal position and gain. This is very bad. One way of overcoming this dangerous tendency is, in our campaign, to in-

crease production and practise economy, to streamline our organizations and transfer cadres to lower levels so that a considerable number of them will return to productive work. We must see to it that all our cadres and all our people constantly bear in mind that, while ours is a big socialist country, it is an economically backward and poor country, and that this is a very great contradiction. If we want to see China rich and strong, we must be prepared for several decades of intensive effort which will include, among other things, carrying out a policy of building our country through hard work and thrift — of practising strict economy and combating waste.

12. CHINA'S PATH TO INDUSTRIALIZATION

In discussing our path to industrialization, I am here concerned principally with the relationship between the growth of heavy industry, light industry and agriculture. Heavy industry is the core of China's economic construction. This must be affirmed. But, at the same time, full attention must be paid to the development of agriculture and light industry.

As China is a great agricultural country, with over eighty per cent of its population in the villages, its industry and agriculture must be developed simultaneously. Only then will industry have raw materials and a market, and only so will it be possible to accumulate fairly large funds for the building up of a powerful heavy industry. Everyone knows that

light industry is closely related to agriculture. Without agriculture there can be no light industry. But it is not so clearly understood that agriculture provides heavy industry with an important market. This fact, however, will be more readily appreciated as the gradual progress of technological improvement and modernization of agriculture calls for more and more machinery, fertilizers, water conservancy and electric power projects and transport facilities for the farms, as well as fuel and building materials for the rural consumers. The entire national economy will benefit if we can achieve an even greater growth in our agriculture and thus induce a correspondingly greater development of light industry during the period of the Second and Third Five-Year Plans. With the development of agriculture and light industry, heavy industry will be assured of its market and funds, and thus grow faster. Hence what may seem to be a slower pace of industrialization is actually not so, and indeed the tempo may even be speeded up. In three five-year plans or perhaps a little longer, China's annual steel output can be raised to 20,000,000 tons or more from the peak pre-liberation output of something over 900,000 tons in 1943. This will gladden people both in town and countryside.

I do not propose to talk at length on economic questions today. With barely seven years of economic construction behind us, we still lack experience and need to get more. We had no experience to start with in revolutionary work either, and it was only after

we had taken a number of tumbles and learned our lesson that we won nation-wide victory. What we must do now is to cut the time we take to gain experience in economic construction to less than it took us to get experience in revolutionary work and not pay such a high price for it. We'll have to pay some sort of price, but we hope that it will not be as high as that paid during the revolutionary period. We must realize that a contradiction is involved in this question between the objective laws of development of socialist economy and our subjective understanding, a contradiction which needs to be resolved in practice. This contradiction will also manifest itself as a contradiction between different persons, that is, a contradiction between those who have a relatively accurate understanding of objective laws and those whose understanding of them is relatively inaccurate; and so this is also a contradiction among the people. Every contradiction is an objective reality, and it is our task to understand it and resolve it as correctly as we can.

In order to turn our country into an industrial power, we must learn conscientiously from the advanced experience of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union has been building socialism for forty years, and we treasure its experience.

Let us consider who designed and equipped so many important factories for us. Was it the United States? or Britain? No, neither of them. Only the Soviet Union was willing to do so because it is a socialist country and our ally. In addition to the Soviet

Union some brother countries of Eastern Europe also gave us assistance. It is perfectly true that we should learn from the good experience of all countries, socialist or capitalist, but the main thing is still to learn from the Soviet Union.

Now there are two different attitudes in learning from others. One is a doctrinaire attitude, transplanting everything, whether suited or not to the conditions of our country. This is not a good attitude. Another attitude is to use our heads and learn those things which suit conditions in our country; that is, to absorb whatever experience is useful to us. This is the attitude we should adopt.

To strengthen our solidarity with the Soviet Union, to strengthen our solidarity with all socialist countries, this is our fundamental policy; herein lies our basic interest. Then there are the Asian and African countries and all the peace-loving countries and peoples. We must strengthen and develop our solidarity with them. United with these two forces, we will not stand alone. As for the imperialist countries, we should also unite with their peoples and strive to co-exist in peace with those countries, do business with them and prevent any possible war, but under no circumstances should we harbour any unrealistic notions about those countries.



